

[Alan Wallace]

12/1/38 W. MAss 1938-9 No. I.

STATE Massachusetts

NAME OF WORKER Louise G. Bassett

ADDRESS Brookfield, Massachusetts

SUBJECT Living Lore

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT: Alan Wallace, Brookfield,

Massachusetts

Alan Wallace is a big man well over six feet and weighing about one hundred and ninety pounds. By no chance can he be called good looking, in fact he is really homely; but his large mouth is even smiling and his kind eyes lighted with a twinkle.

Alan was born in Brookfield about fifty-five years ago. His family originally came from Paine where his paternal grandfather was [a ar??] of [love?] wealth and influence. Alan's father came to Brookfield [ostensibly?] to take [?????]. The venture never materialized and he spent his life working a small worn-down farm. He had a small income from his parents, but never [added?] to it so that on his death his children had no material inheritance. But they did have a heritage of culture and love. Mrs. Wallace, a refined well-educated woman, was a superb mother instilling in her children a love for education, music and art. It was she who encouraged Alan in his desire to be a concert singer, and saw to it that he was sent abroad for several years ' study. Unfortunately just as he was about to make his debut on the concert stage, Alan was stricken with a serious illness which left him speechless for over two years. Eventually he recovered his speaking voice, but

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he has never been able to sing. He loves music, has a large collection of records for his victrola, listens constantly to concerts over the radio, but deplores the prevalence of jazz and "swing."

Alan lives in the "Over the River" district of Brookfield some distance from the town center. He has an apartment of three rooms in a house owned by a Miss Sibley who is a trained nurse, permanently engaged at the Mary Lane Hospital in Ware. Miss / Sibley returns 3 home for occasional week-ends and vacations leaving the care of the house in her absence to Alan. He was a pleasant sitting room furnished comfortably with several easy chairs, a couple of tables loaded with books, a book case and a very large couch covered with [?], cretonne. The room is shabby and worn, but it has a "come in, make yourself comfortable and feel at home" look that many much finer places entirely lack.

When Miss Sibley is not at home Alan has the use of the kitchen and prepares all his meals. He is an excellent cook and can bake, fry and boil better than many housewives. He takes pride in his cooking as in his large well-planned flower garden.

No one in Brookfield, least of all Alan himself , will deny that [he's?] lazy. He freely admits he has no ambition and does not mind because he is not a success. He considers it a joke on his Puritans ancestors who worked so hard to make their way, that he, almost the last of the family is just "nobody."

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He is an expert designer and has worked for years, off and on, in the wall paper mill in Warren. He talks of his work with reluctance, seems to dislike it and observes that he works only because he must , to live and he enjoys living. He is forever buying Irish Sweepstake tickets, taking chances and trying contests. At present the [Lovie?] Quiz is absorbing all his time.

He spends much of his time reading and has a large well-selected collection of books. He owns an old Ford and only the braves t dare ride with him. He is always in demand

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at parties and invariably is the [one who?] runs a last minute errand, tries to quiet the baby roused from sleep and escorts the spinster school teacher home. Nothing is too much trouble for Alan - sitting up nights with the sick, chopping wood for some old lady, explaining an arithmetic problem to young Johnny or just being friendly and kind. Everybody likes him and Alan seems to like everybody.